

DIARY
of a
Wimpy Kid
Double DooL



Jeff Kinney

JUNE

Tuesday

Well, today was the **last day of school**, and honestly, it was totally pointless. Half the teachers didn't even show up. I guess they figured nobody was going to do any work anyway, which they were totally right about.

The ones who *did* show up just gave us "free time," which basically meant everyone was watching videos on their phones or throwing paper airplanes around.

I don't know why they even bother making us come in on the last day. They should just mail us our report cards and let us sleep in.

But whatever. **Summer is officially HERE**, and I am NOT wasting a single second of it doing anything school related.

Wednesday

You'd think the first day of summer would be amazing. No school, no homework, no teachers. But guess what? **Mom** already has a whole "Summer Fun Schedule" posted on the fridge.

Apparently, "sleeping until noon and playing video games all day" doesn't count as "productive."

She signed me up for something called "**Reading Hour at the Library**" every morning. I asked if I could at least bring a comic book, but she said it must be a "real book with a spine." That makes it any more fun.

And if that wasn't bad enough, **Rodrick** keeps blasting his band's "practice sessions" in the garage. I say "practice" because all they really do is play the same terrible guitar riff over and over until someone yells at them to stop (usually me).

So yeah. Day one of summer = already going downhill.

Thursday

Okay, today was **TRAUMATIC**.

I was just minding my own business, eating cereal and thinking about how to fake a stomachache to get out of “Reading Hour,” when I heard this **weird banging sound** coming from the garage.

At first, I thought Rodrick was doing something dumb again, like trying to build a drum set out of trash cans. But when I went to check, I saw something that nearly made me **pass out**:

Mom. With a hammer. SMASHING MY XBOX.

I couldn’t believe it. She had it up on the workbench like it was some kind of science experiment, and she was going full **crazy mode** on it.

When I asked her what she was doing, she said, “*This is what happens when video games rot your brain, and you ignore the Summer Fun Schedule.*”

I didn’t even know what to say. That Xbox had all my saved games, including my **Level 87 character in Twisted Wizard**.

R.I.P., buddy.

So yeah... if anyone needs me, I’ll be in my room. Mourning.

Friday

So I spent most of today in **deep mourning**. I even made a little cardboard tombstone that says:
"Here Lies Greg's Xbox – Gone Too Soon"

I stuck it next to my desk and lit a birthday candle. It felt right.

But then I started thinking... if I want to survive this summer, I need a **plan**. There's no way I'm going for two whole months with zero video games. That's like asking a fish to survive without water.

I figured I had two options:

1. Beg Dad for a new Xbox.
2. Sell Rodrick's junk online and use the money to buy a used one.

Option 1 didn't really go well. I asked Dad if he'd consider getting me a replacement "for educational purposes." He didn't even look up from his newspaper. He just said, "*Ask me again when you move out.*"

So now I'm working on Option 2. Rodrick's room is basically a **goldmine** of worthless trash that other people might pay for. I already took pictures of a broken amp, a lava lamp that doesn't work, and a hoodie that smells like corn chips.

If I price everything at ten bucks, I only need like... 30 buyers. It should be easy. Right?

Saturday

Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse... **they did.**

This morning, I woke up to the sound of **glass shattering** and Rodrick yelling, "*MOM, WHAT THE HECK?!*"

I ran downstairs and found **Mom in full destruction mode** again—this time with a **crowbar**.

She just stopped at my Xbox. Nope. She was going **full Thanos** on **EVERY game console in the house**.

Rodrick's old PlayStation? Gone. Manny's Switch? **Smashed**.

Even **Dad's retro console** he never plays but always says "has sentimental value"? **Destroyed**.

It was like a video game **mass extinction event**.

When I asked Mom why she was doing this, she just pointed at the fridge and said, "*I gave you boys a chance to follow the schedule. You made your choice.*"

Rodrick locked himself in his room and started blasting heavy metal, and Manny just sat in the corner crying like someone canceled his birthday.

As for me? I'm seriously considering moving in with **Gramma**. I heard she has a tablet and no idea how to use parental controls.

This summer is turning into a **nightmare**, and it's only Day 4.

Sunday

Okay, this is officially **the biggest betrayal of my life.**

After yesterday's **Console Apocalypse**, the house was completely game-free. I was still recovering emotionally when I walked into the kitchen this morning and saw **Manny** sitting at the table, smiling like he had just won the lottery.

At first, I thought maybe he had finally lost his mind. But then I saw it — a receipt on the table with the words:

"Preorder Confirmation – Nintendo Switch 2."

I couldn't believe it. **MOM preordered Manny the new Switch.** The same woman who just went full wrecking ball on every console in the house is now handing out preorders like it's Christmas?!

I asked her what the deal was, and she said, "*Manny has been very cooperative with the Summer Fun Schedule.*"

You have GOT to be kidding me. Manny's idea of "cooperating" is scribbling in a coloring book for five minutes and then eating glue.

Meanwhile, I'm the one getting punished like I committed a felony.

So now Manny's walking around acting like he's the king of the house, and I'm stuck flipping through **activity books** and pretending to care about **outdoor scavenger hunts**.

This is a **travesty of justice**, and I will NOT let it stand.

Monday

If anyone's reading this: **send help.** I think I'm living in some kind of **twisted alternate universe** where fun is illegal.

This morning, I figured I'd at least try to use my **computer** to watch a few videos or play a browser game. You know—*something* to remind me I still live in the 21st century.

But the second I clicked the power button, the screen lit up for half a second... and then **BOOM—it exploded.**

Okay, not like “fireball” exploded, but the whole screen just went black, and when it came back on, it was no longer a computer. It had transformed into a giant **interactive textbook**.

And not even a cool one about volcanoes or dinosaurs. Nope.

SCIENCE.

With chapters like “The Exciting World of Osmosis” and “Let’s Talk About Mitochondria!”

There was even a robotic voice that said,
“Welcome back, Greg! Time to learn!”
in this creepy cheerful tone.

I checked the back and found a little sticker that said:
“PROPERTY OF MOM – Education Mode ENABLED.”

So now my **last remaining screen** has turned into a **glorified homework machine**, and I’m starting to think Mom is slowly turning the house into some kind of **fun-free boot camp**.

At this point, I’d trade my soul for five minutes on a loading screen.

Tuesday

Today I made a **bold decision**:

If this house is going to keep turning into a fun-sucking prison, then I'm getting out.

So, I packed up a **bag of essentials**:

- Two granola bars
- My sketchbook
- \$3.75 in change
- A toothbrush (Mom would find me if I got a cavity)

And I **hit the road**.

Okay, not like “hitchhiking across the country” hit the road — more like I walked to the gas station down the block and then took the bus to the **interstate rest stop**. But still, it was a **journey**.

I figured maybe I could make it to **Gramma’s house** if I followed the highway signs and avoided anyone in a minivan. Gramma always has snacks and doesn’t know how to set up passwords on her Wi-Fi, which makes her basically a saint.

But after about two hours, my granola bars were gone, my phone was at 6%, and I was starting to **smell like outdoors**.

So, I ducked into a rest area, used the bathroom sink to wash my face, and sat under a vending machine hoping someone would mistake me for a lost tourist and offer me a ride.

Instead, the only person who talked to me was a guy who asked if I wanted to join his **jug band**.

Long story short: I called Rowley to come get me. His mom was *not* happy when she saw me sitting by the soda machine with my hoodie tied around my head like a survival hat.

Back home now. Mom hasn’t said a word—just gave me a “we’ll talk later” look. That might be worse than yelling.

But hey, at least I’m back in civilization. And I’ve got a new plan...

Wednesday

Just when I thought things couldn't get any weirder... **they did. Again.**

I was lying on the couch recovering from my failed road trip (and possibly mild dehydration) when **Mom walked in with a huge smile** on her face and said:
"Pack your bags, Greg — we're going to ECUADOR!"

I thought maybe I misheard her.

Like maybe she said "we're going to eat a door" or something equally insane. But nope—**Ecuador**, the actual country.

I asked her WHY, and she said it was for some kind of "**family enrichment experience.**" Apparently she signed us up for a **two-week volunteer program** where we'll be "immersing ourselves in culture, building character, and connecting with nature."

In other words:

No internet. No video games. No escape.

Rodrick asked if there were concerts in Ecuador, and when Mom said "*No, but lots of bird watching!*", he walked straight into a wall.

Manny's already packing like it's a vacation to Disneyland, and he keeps calling it "Eccu-dar" like it's a space planet or something.

I don't know what's worse — the fact that Mom thinks this is a "fun surprise," or the fact that she already bought matching "**Team Heffley**" T-shirts for all of us to wear at the airport.

I don't even have a passport.

At this point, I'm not sure if I should scream, cry, or start digging a tunnel out of the house.

Wednesday Night

Yup, still Wednesday.

Somehow it feels like this day has lasted **three years**.

Turns out Mom already packed all our bags *for us* and booked a **red-eye flight** to Ecuador. So, by 9 PM, we were standing in line at the airport, wearing our matching bright yellow “**TEAM HEFFLEY**” shirts like we were part of some weird cult.

Rodrick kept trying to sneak away and “accidentally” get left behind, but Mom tied one of his drumsticks to her backpack so he couldn’t go far.

Manny was having the time of his life. He brought a **neck pillow shaped like a sloth**, kept pointing at random people and whispering, “*Is that Ecuador?*”, and for some reason had **TWO passports**.

I don’t even know how that’s possible.

Meanwhile, I was just trying to keep it together. The airport was packed, loud, and smelled like a combo of old popcorn and baby wipes. And then security made me **take my shoes off**, and I realized I accidentally packed **TWO left sneakers**.

When we finally got to the gate, Mom made us do a **group chant** she learned from the travel brochure:

“*Open minds, open hearts, one world together!*”

Even the gate agent looked uncomfortable.

So now we’re sitting here waiting to board. It’s 11:37 PM.

Rodrick is asleep under a bench, Manny is eating half a pretzel he found on a chair, and I’m writing this entry using a pen I borrowed from a guy who was also crying.

This is going to be a **long, long trip**.

Thursday

So yeah. Remember that flight to Ecuador?

Delayed.

Right after I finished writing last night's entry, the gate agent got on the speaker and said something like:

"Due to weather conditions over Panama, Flight 281 has been rescheduled for tomorrow morning."

Mom tried to stay positive and said, "*Well, this just gives us more time to bond as a family!*" Rodrick said something under his breath that wasn't family friendly.

So we ended up spending the night at one of those **airport hotels** that looks fancy in the pictures but feels like it was built on top of a swamp.

The carpet was weirdly sticky, the lights flickered like we were in a horror movie, and there was this constant humming sound coming from the air vent that may or may not have been **a trapped raccoon**.

Mom called it "a charming travel hiccup."

I call it **prison with complimentary shampoo**.

We only had one room, so we all had to share.

Rodrick got the cot, which he broke in under five minutes, Manny kept kicking me in his sleep and whispering "sloth," and at one point I woke up to find Dad trying to use the TV remote to turn off the lamp.

Breakfast was a plastic-wrapped muffin, half a banana, and a tiny orange juice cup that tasted like it had been filtered through a shoelace.

And guess what?

The flight's been **delayed AGAIN**.

So now we're just sitting in the lobby of the **Very Fancy (but Actually Super Sketchy) Airport Hotel**, wearing the same clothes from yesterday, and pretending this is all totally normal.

At this point, I don't even care about Ecuador.

I just want a nap. And socks that match.

Friday

So, this morning... I woke up inside a suitcase.

Yeah, you read that right.

I have **absolutely no idea** how this happened. One minute I was sitting on the floor of the hotel lobby trying to keep my eyes open (the coffee there was even worse than the orange juice), and the next thing I knew, I was stuffed into what I can only assume was **Rodrick's suitcase** with the zipper half-closed.

At first, I thought I was dreaming. But then I noticed I had **two granola bars** in my pocket (thank you, survival instincts), so I figured I might as well make the most of it.

After a few minutes of awkwardly wiggling around in the dark, I managed to get myself out, which turned into an emergency escape plan that involved elbowing a hole through a bunch of dirty socks and drumsticks.

Once I finally made it out of the suitcase, I realized... I was **still at the airport**.

Apparently, Mom and Dad had checked out and moved on to some other gate, probably thinking I was already with them (or maybe they just forgot me?).

So, I decided to take matters into my own hands and **find food**.

I wandered around the airport like a survivalist who's lost all hope. There were a few **vending machines**, but I was too scared to buy anything that might be expired. So I made my way to the food court, where I had a **strategic snack** of a soggy pretzel and a half-empty soda cup that looked suspiciously like someone's leftover lunch.

I didn't even care anymore.

When I finally found Mom and Dad, they looked *shocked* that I wasn't with them. They were just about to board when I casually walked up, chewing my pretzel, and said:

"What's up? You guys didn't think I was coming?"

Dad tried to act like it wasn't a big deal, but I'm pretty sure he's the one who left me in the suitcase.

So here I am, **still stuck in the airport** with a bunch of random snacks, but now I'm kind of glad I didn't get on that flight to Ecuador.

At least in this airport, no one's trying to make me "**bond as a family**".

Friday Night

Well, it took an entire day, but we **finally made it onto the plane.**

It's now **9:45 PM**, and I'm sitting on a cramped, ancient airplane that looks like it hasn't been cleaned since **the '90s**. The seats are way too close together, and I'm pretty sure the guy next to me is wearing a **whole bouquet of cologne**.

We all boarded in a bit of a mad rush. Rodrick was grumbling about **having to check his guitar**, which he insisted was "a piece of art" (it's just a piece of wood with some strings on it). Manny, meanwhile, was sitting in his seat with a **neck pillow shaped like a potato** and kept asking if we were "in Ecuador yet."

Mom's already starting to talk about **how great this experience is going to be for us** and how "we're going to be a more connected family after this trip."

I think she forgot that **I literally just spent 24 hours hiding in a suitcase**.

I decided I had to escape to the bathroom to avoid having a meltdown. When I came back, I found that the in-flight entertainment system was broken—no movies, no games, just a **flight map** that showed us flying over **the Atlantic**.

So, I did what anyone would do in my position:

I made my own fun.

I spent the next hour trying to find ways to mess with Manny, who was *too excited to sleep*, by pretending to be the "**Seatbelt Police**." I'd tap his shoulder and whisper, "*Excuse me, sir, you're in violation of the no-snack rule*," and he'd freak out every time.

Rodrick, on the other hand, was fully asleep with his head against the window, drooling on the armrest, which I took as my cue to draw a **mustache** on him with a Sharpie.

As for Mom and Dad? They're over there **discussing the "importance of cultural immersion"** like it's a TED Talk. I'm starting to think maybe they're **the ones who need a vacation**.

If this flight lasts any longer, I'm going to end up walking around on the wing just to get some **space**.

Saturday Morning

So, you won't believe what happened.

We're now in first class.

Yeah, somehow, Mom managed to talk her way into an **upgrade** when we got on the plane. I guess there was some mix-up with the seating, and suddenly, we were all **sitting in the front** of the plane like some kind of **VIP family**.

And I'll admit, **first class is an absolute game-changer**.

The seats are **huge**—I can stretch my legs without bumping into the seat in front of me. There's a **huge screen** in front of me that has **Netflix and YouTube**. So instead of staring at the back of a seat for the next 8 hours, I was able to **binge-watch my favorite shows**. I can't even remember the last time I saw a **real screen** that didn't have educational apps or weird science videos on it.

The food? Don't even get me started. I had **real eggs, bacon, and pancakes** instead of some sad muffin that looked like it had been on a shelf since 2009. And **Manny** was over the moon because they gave him a little kit with a **toy airplane** and **goldfish crackers**. (Of course, he thought the crackers were "from Ecuador.")

Rodrick tried to act like he wasn't impressed, but I saw him **binge-eating** all the complimentary snacks and asking for a second helping of "**chips**" every 10 minutes.

Mom's all giddy about the "*luxury travel experience*," and even Dad's acting like a kid in a candy store, which, if you think about it, is **weirdly normal** for him.

But the best part?

They have Wi-Fi.

So, I finally got to send a text to Rowley, telling him about my journey so far. Of course, I didn't mention the part where I ended up in a suitcase, because he'd probably think I was making it up. I also got to catch up on some of the **memes I missed** while I was stuck in that "airport prison."

I'm pretty sure **Ecuador** is still a thing, but after all this luxury, I'm honestly wondering if I should just **stay in the first-class cabin forever** and claim it as my new home.

This place is a **paradise** compared to that sticky hotel and the economy section.

Saturday Afternoon

Okay, so, we've finally landed in **Ecuador**, and I can officially say that this place is **nothing like I imagined.**

When we first stepped off the plane, I was expecting **sunshine, palm trees, and maybe a cool city vibe**. Instead, I was hit with a **wall of humidity** that felt like the air was trying to **eat me alive**.

I immediately regretted wearing a hoodie on the flight. **It's 90 degrees**, and I look like I'm trying to smuggle an entire gym under my jacket.

We were supposed to meet up with some **volunteer group** who's supposed to guide us around and "help us acclimate" (whatever that means), but instead, we were greeted by this **tall guy in a cowboy hat** who I swear was wearing the same shirt as my **Ecuadorian PE teacher** from the online geography class I took last week.

Rodrick tried to ask if they had a "rock music scene," but the guy just looked confused and said, "*We have mountains.*"

Great.

Manny's already running around trying to pet random stray dogs, and Dad's busy **haggling over souvenirs** at a kiosk that looks like it was built during **Stone Age**. Mom, meanwhile, is talking to **some random lady** who keeps saying "*Cultural exchange, the beauty of the Andes...*" while handing out pamphlets.

Here's the thing: **Ecuador isn't all that bad.**

Except I'm pretty sure it's a **trap** to make us all "appreciate life without technology" or whatever Mom's goal is this summer.

At least **the first class** was a solid 12 hours of bliss before I got pulled into this. I can already feel the **disconnecting** happening—no Wi-Fi, no Netflix, and my phones only got 8% left.

So, we're off to our "volunteer center" now. According to the brochure, we're going to be "immersing ourselves in nature." If nature means **sweat and awkward silence**, I'm ready.

Saturday Evening

Okay, things just got a little... **weird**.

We **finally settled** in an apartment that Mom rented in the city. It's nice—**no weird sticky carpet** or flickering lights here—but it's definitely not the same as first class.

When we walked in, Mom immediately started talking about how we were going to have a “family dinner,” and it turns out we were meeting **her cousin Yara Miranda**, who was born in Ecuador. I didn’t think much of it at first, but then **Yara** showed up, and I have to say, she’s *something else*.

For one, she’s super **energetic** and has that vibe like she could start a business with **her bare hands**. She immediately started talking to Mom in Spanish (which made me feel like I should’ve actually paid attention in my language class), and I just kind of stood there pretending I was fluent in “**eye rolls**”.

And then there’s her **husband**, Tim Rule. I don’t know how to describe him other than “**totally out of place**.” He’s this tall, pale guy who’s wearing a **Hawaiian shirt** and cargo shorts, even though we’re in the middle of **Ecuador’s summer**.

But the real kicker?

Tim and Yara have identical twin sons, both 9 years old.

I didn’t think I’d meet any kids my age here, so when I saw these two guys walking around, I figured they’d be all **cool and quiet** or maybe **borderline normal**. But no.

These twins are **crazy**.

One of them is always **playing with a yo-yo** and pretending to be a **superhero**, while the other one spends his time talking about his **secret plans to invent a robot army**. They’re like if **Manny** and **Rodrick** had a baby and it grew up to have an *entirely different level of weird*.

I tried to say hi, but they just looked at me like I was an **alien** and then immediately started fighting over the best spot to sit on the couch.

At least the dinner wasn’t awful. Yara made **some kind of soup** (I think it had potatoes in it?) and Tim kept telling everyone how much he loves “Ecuadorian flavors,” even though he’s clearly never eaten anything that didn’t come from a **fast-food drive thru**.

Still, it’s a change of pace. Just when I thought my life couldn’t get any more ridiculous, it looks like I’m stuck with these twins for **the next two weeks**.

Sunday Morning

Okay, so **things just got way more intense** than I could have imagined.

I thought meeting Yara and Tim's twins, **Matias** and **Nicolas**, would be just a normal, annoying experience of playing games I don't understand and enduring endless "**weird twin energy**."

But no. These two are... **different**.

First, they told me they were born in **Ecuador** (obviously), but they moved to the **U.S.** when they were **little**, so they speak perfect Spanish and perfect English.

And let me tell you — these twins are **freakishly smart**.

They were sitting at the kitchen table talking about **quantum physics**, **robotics**, and **theories of time travel** while I was just trying to figure out how to open a jar of salsa.

The first one, **Matias**, looked at me and said, "*Do you know that the average person can't even grasp the concept of multi-dimensional space?*"

I thought he was just messing with me, but then **Nicolas** chimed in with "*Yes, but that's because our understanding of physics is too limited. The true nature of the universe is beyond basic comprehension.*"

I didn't even know what to say. I was just trying to figure out why their cereal tasted like **cardboard with a hint of sadness**.

And then—**THEN**—they pulled out their **IQ test results**.

I know, right? I didn't even ask, but they handed them to me like it was **normal**. **145 IQ** each.

I mean, that's **way above my pay grade**, but somehow, they made me feel like I was the one who needed to take an **IQ test** just to get out of this conversation.

After about 30 minutes of them explaining the **fundamentals of artificial intelligence** (and making me feel like I'd been **left behind by humanity**), I tried to change the subject. So, I asked them what **games** they like to play.

Turns out, they're into things like **chess**, **advanced board games**, and **creating apps that track the movements of bees**. No joke.

These twins are like **walking Wikipedia pages** on anything that's even remotely nerdy. And as much as I **hate to admit it**, I'm starting to feel like **I need to level up** just to survive hanging out with them.

So here I am, trying to digest some weird Ecuadorian breakfast while listening to two 9-year-olds talk about **time dilation** and **artificial neural networks**.

Monday Morning

Okay, so today has been one of the **most bizarre days of my entire life**. I'm still trying to process everything that happened, but I'll give it a shot.

So, we were supposed to meet some of **Mom's friends** in the city today for a little "Ecuadorian culture immersion." I wasn't expecting anything crazy, just a lot of **local food** and **awkward small talk**, but then we walked into this **random café**.

And guess who I saw sitting there at a corner table, sipping on what I can only describe as a **mystical cup of coffee**?

Jeff Kinney.

Yeah, **Jeff Kinney**, the guy who wrote the **Diary of a Wimpy Kid books**.

At first, I thought it was some sort of mistake. Like, maybe there was another **bald guy** in a **black hoodie** sitting in the café. But no. It was him.

I mean, I **knew** he was famous and all, but I didn't expect to run into him **randomly** in Ecuador. He looked up when we walked in, smiled, and said, "*Oh, hey, you must be the Rule family. I've been waiting for you.*"

And that's when things got real.

Turns out, **Jeff Kinney** wasn't just here for vacation. No, apparently, he's been **secretly writing about my life**—the whole time.

Yes, you read that right.

He casually told me, "*I've been keeping track of Greg's life for years. It's a fascinating story.*"

I literally had to sit down because my brain just **shut off**.

Apparently, Jeff has been keeping a **diary of my entire life**, from the time I was born, through all my **mishaps** and "**wimpy**" **moments**, and he's been using it as the basis for the **Diary of a Wimpy Kid books**.

I just stared at him. "*Wait, so everything in the books... is about me?*" I asked.

He nodded, casually. "*Well, not everything. Some parts are exaggerated for dramatic effect. But yeah, you're the inspiration.*"

Now, I know I'm not the **best writer**, but **being written about** is just **next level weird**. The fact that Jeff had been following me around in **some weird spy way** without me knowing was mind-blowing.

But then—**THEN**—he handed me a **new, unpublished diary**.

It had my name on the cover, and the first page read: “*Greg Heffley’s Secret Life, Volume 12.*”

I was freaking out, but **Matias** and **Nicolas** were just sitting there, totally unfazed. Like, “*Yeah, whatever, we meet a new famous person every week.*”

I didn’t know what to say. I was staring at this **book about my own life** written by one of the most famous authors in the world. I was thinking about how my entire existence might have been **prescribed by Jeff Kinney**, which is pretty much the **weirdly meta thing ever**.

Jeff kept talking about how “**authentic**” my life has been, and how it’s a perfect mix of **awkwardness, chaos, and comedic timing**. I wanted to throw something at him for **calling my life “authentic”**, but then he started asking about **Manny** and **Rodrick**, which was even weirder.

I don’t know what to think right now.

Part of me wants to freak out, and part of me is like, “*Well, this explains a lot.*”

But the most **surreal** part of the day was when **Jeff** said, “*I’m already working on the next book... it’s about your trip to Ecuador.*”

So yeah, apparently, **this** whole mess of a trip to Ecuador is going to be in the next **Diary of a Wimpy Kid** book.

If I’m not **famous already**, I guess I will be soon.

Tuesday Morning

So, today was a total **mood shift**. I wasn’t expecting this at all, but here we are.

We had to go to the **mourning of Uncle Lawrence**. He passed away recently, and, well, it was **heavy**.

But here’s the thing about **Uncle Lawrence**—he was **never around** for family stuff. Like, **never**. I don’t think I’ve seen him in person for years. He was always off **traveling** somewhere, doing whatever weird work he did that no one ever really understood. And honestly, **he was kind of a legend** in the family because of how **rarely he showed up**.

He would always send these **cards** for birthdays or holidays with messages like, “*Sorry, I’m off in some remote part of the world. Will make it next time!*” But there was **never a next time**.

It’s like he was **always a mystery**.

The weirdest part? He would sometimes **appear virtually** at family gatherings, like at **Chester Heffley’s funeral** (grandpa’s funeral, remember that?). Uncle Lawrence showed up **on webcam**, acting like it was just another casual thing. I don’t even know how he had time for it between his **mysterious globetrotting** and his strange **business deals**.

Today, on his mourning, everyone was super somber, but I couldn't help but think about how **he was never really there** for the family. He'd pop in and out with a webcam and be like, "*Hey, folks, sorry I missed you at the wedding/party/funeral, but I'm on a helicopter ride over the Amazon right now. Maybe next time!*"

And somehow, every time, **it worked**. Everyone would go on about how "**adventurous**" and "**important**" Uncle Lawrence was, but honestly, it always felt like we were just his **backup plan** for when his trips didn't pan out.

Now, here we are, at his **real funeral**, and it's... well, **weird**.

Mom's getting all emotional, but I can't shake the thought that Uncle Lawrence might have been the kind of guy who would show up here via **webcam** if he were alive, just to keep up the act. Maybe it was because he didn't want to get **too tied down** to anything, or maybe he just didn't know how to deal with **family stuff** in person.

Either way, I didn't know what to feel.

All I can think about now is how **weirdly disconnected** our family can be sometimes. It's like we have all this love and care for each other, but we also have these **empty spots** that people like Uncle Lawrence can just slip into whenever they feel like it.

I guess that's family for you.

Tuesday Afternoon

Okay, so this day just took a **completely weird turn**.

I was just trying to get through this mourning of Uncle Lawrence, you know? Being polite, sitting through awkward speeches, and trying not to think too much about the fact that we're at a **funeral for a guy who was never really here**. But then **Manny** had to go and **make it even weirder**.

At one point, he started **fidgeting** around the coffin like he was **bored out of his mind** (which is a pretty common Manny move). I figured he was just acting out, trying to get attention like always, so I ignored him for a bit. But then I heard this **loud ripping sound**, and when I looked up, I saw **Manny ripping up the side of the coffin***.

Like, full-on **tearing through** the fabric covering it.

Everyone gasped, and there was this **moment of silence** where you could just feel the awkwardness and confusion in the air. It was like **nobody knew what to do**.

But Manny? He didn't even care. He just **kept going**, like he was opening some kind of **treasure chest** or something.

I couldn't even understand what was happening at first. Was he having a **meltdown**? Was he trying to get a better look at the coffin? Was he just trying to be **weird**?

And then, finally, he **yanked** the lid open.

At that point, everyone was freaking out, screaming and running around. And there it was—**Uncle Lawrence's body**.

Now, I know funerals are supposed to be **somber** and all, but seriously, who in their right mind would just **open the coffin** like that?

I'm standing there, **mortified**, while Manny is peering down at Uncle Lawrence's body like it's the most **normal thing in the world**. I could hear him muttering, "*Huh, so this is what a dead person looks like...*"

Mom was freaking out, yelling at Manny to get away, but he just kept standing there, staring at Uncle Lawrence with a look of complete **disinterest**.

Honestly, I was **speechless**. What do you even say after your little brother just **rips open a coffin** at a funeral?

Mom eventually rushed over to stop him, but the damage had already been done. Now everyone was staring at us like we were the **crazy family**. And yeah, I guess we kind of are.

I just don't get it. Uncle Lawrence was never present in our lives, and now his funeral is all about **Manny's weirdness**. I mean, **of course** it had to go this way. Why wouldn't it?

Manny got a good scolding from Mom, but even she couldn't quite explain how we were supposed to handle this situation.

All I know is, I think I might need to avoid funerals for the next few years.

Tuesday Afternoon

Okay, I seriously don't know how to recover from today. I honestly thought it couldn't get **weirder**, but it did.

After Manny **ripped open the coffin**, we were already in a full-on **family disaster** mode. **Mom** was screaming, everyone was **freaking out**, and I'm just standing there in shock like, *What now? How do we make this any worse?*

Well, it turns out **Manny had one more surprise** in store.

So, after opening the coffin and inspecting Uncle Lawrence's body like it was just another one of his toys, **Manny** started looking around the room. Now, normally, I'd think he was just trying to **escape the chaos**, but I didn't realize **what he was up to** until it was way too late.

Manny just **walked up** to the coffin, looked down at Uncle Lawrence, and then—**without warning**—he started **peeing** on him.

Yup. He peed on Uncle Lawrence's dead body.

It wasn't like he was doing it on purpose, though. He **didn't know** what to do. There was no bathroom nearby, and apparently, in Manny's mind, the coffin was just the **next best thing**.

I don't even think he realized the **gravity of the situation**. He was just standing there, peeing on the side of the coffin, as though it were just another **random object** in his path.

Everyone was absolutely **horrified**. I could see people running to stop him, but it was already too late. There he was, standing in front of **Uncle Lawrence** with a **look of absolute confusion** on his face, like he was trying to figure out if he was **dreaming**.

By the time Mom finally managed to yank him away, the **damage was done**.

Honestly, I have no idea what anyone else was thinking. I was too busy trying to figure out how to explain this to everyone. The entire family was **mortified**, and I'm sure no one will ever look at **Manny** the same way again.

Now we've gone from a **weird family funeral** to **Manny peeing on Uncle Lawrence's body**. It's like this trip just keeps going in the **worst direction possible**.

At this point, I'm pretty sure **family gatherings** will be forever changed. And I'm also pretty sure **Manny won't be allowed anywhere near another coffin** for a long time. **Tuesday Afternoon (Part 2)**

Okay, so everything just hit **peak weirdness**—like, the universe itself must have decided we hadn't suffered enough.

After the whole **peeing on the coffin fiasco**, I thought there was no way this could get **any weirder**, but guess what happened next?

Uncle Lawrence woke up.

Yup, you heard me.

In the middle of the **chaos**, while everyone was still reeling from what had just happened, we all heard this **low, groggy voice** coming from the coffin. At first, I thought I was just hearing things, but then the voice got louder and clearer.

"Yay, I'm in Ecuador!"

Everyone stopped dead in their tracks, and the room went **silent**. It wasn't just some random noise either—it was **Uncle Lawrence's voice**.

I looked over at **Mom** to see if she had any idea what was going on, and she was just staring at the coffin in complete shock. And then, as if on cue, the lid of the coffin **slowly started to lift**.

Uncle Lawrence's eyes opened, and he sat up, looking around like he was on some **vacation**. His hair was a bit disheveled, and he had a **confused grin** on his face.

He looked at everyone, still in the coffin, and said, “*Well, this place looks... interesting. Not what I was expecting. But hey, Ecuador, right?!*”

At that point, I’m just standing there, mouth wide open, thinking, *Is this some kind of sick joke?*

Uncle Lawrence was alive.

Not just alive, but acting like it was a regular day. As if he’d just been napping for the last few hours, not **lying dead in a coffin**.

He gave everyone a **half-hearted wave**, like, “*Hey, sorry about all that. You know how I am with naps. Just had a little bit of a deep sleep there. Where’s the food? I’m starving!*”

Mom was standing there, literally **unable to speak**.

I’m trying to process what’s happening while **Manny** is just staring at Uncle Lawrence with the most **unbothered expression**.

Somehow, Uncle Lawrence seemed completely **fine**. As if the whole “being dead” thing never happened.

“**I’m sorry about all the confusion, folks, but I had a really long flight,**” he said, still looking **totally casual**. “**Next time, I’ll be sure to grab some food before taking a nap in the coffin. I swear, these things are comfy but dangerous.**”

Everyone was completely **dumbfounded**. Was this some sort of **prank**? A **weird family tradition** we didn’t know about? Or had Uncle Lawrence somehow managed to fake his own death just to make an entrance?

Whatever it was, things were officially off the rails, and I had no idea how we were supposed to react.

But yeah, apparently, **Uncle Lawrence isn’t dead**, and he’s just really good at **showing up at the most unexpected times**.

Tuesday Evening

After the whole **Uncle Lawrence waking up thing**, everyone was feeling way too **confused** to stick around much longer. I mean, what do you even do when your **dead uncle** suddenly decides to wake up and start talking about **Ecuador** like it’s just another normal day?

Honestly, it felt like the whole world was just **out of sync**, and I needed to get out of that bizarre family moment before I lost my mind.

We ended up heading back to the **hotel** because, quite frankly, there was no way I was sticking around to see if Uncle Lawrence had any more surprises up his sleeve.

The **ride back** was pretty quiet. Well, except for Manny, who was, of course, completely **unfazed** by everything that had just happened. He was in the back seat **giggling** about something random—probably imagining **more chaos** in the future, because why not?

I guess we were all kind of in shock, because nobody really spoke much. We just made our way back to the hotel, hoping that maybe, just maybe, things would go back to normal.

When we got back, the hotel felt like a weird little **bubble** where reality hadn't fully caught up with the insanity that had just unfolded. The lights were a little too bright, the elevator music a little too **cheerful**, and the whole building felt too **clean** after everything that had happened today.

We all just went to our rooms, and I was thankful to have a **moment of peace**.

But as I sat there, I couldn't help but feel like **nothing** would ever be normal again. I mean, how do you go back to a regular routine after **Uncle Lawrence woke up from the dead** and **Manny ripped open a coffin**?

I guess the only thing I could do was get some rest and try to **forget the chaos** for a little while.

But something tells me **tomorrow** is going to bring more **unexpected surprises**.

Wednesday Morning

Well, I didn't think the day could get any worse, but **it just did**.

I woke up this morning feeling a little bit **less crazy** after everything that happened yesterday. I mean, **Uncle Lawrence waking up from the dead**, **Manny** pulling stunts left and right, and that whole mess at the **funeral**... I thought maybe today would be a chance for a little **peace and quiet**.

But nope. Of course not.

So, I was sitting on the **hotel balcony**, trying to **check my phone** for updates, scrolling through random stuff, when—**bam**—it happened.

Out of nowhere, my phone just **slipped out of my hand**.

I didn't even realize it at first, but then I saw it fall. My **life** flashed before my eyes as I watched it plummet from the balcony. It felt like **slow motion**, watching it bounce off the railing, do a little **flip**, and then—**thud**—it landed straight onto the **roof of a parked car**.

I felt like I was about to **hyperventilate**. My phone, the one thing that keeps me connected to the world, was **now lying on top of a car** a good **20 feet below**.

I tried to grab it, but there was **no way** I was jumping off the balcony to retrieve it. Besides, I'm pretty sure that would've resulted in me looking like **Manny**, doing some weird stunt that would end up with me in a **situation even worse than the funeral fiasco**.

So I just sat there for a second, feeling a little bit of **rage** bubbling up, trying to figure out if I was going to have to explain to Mom how I **destroyed my phone** on the first day of the trip.

I was in the middle of mentally preparing myself for the **anger management lecture** when Manny, of course, shows up at the worst possible time.

Manny, being the **wild child** that he is, looks at the phone, looks at me, and says, "*I'll get it for you!*"

Before I could even say anything, Manny was already **climbing over the railing**, all ready to do something insane.

I honestly didn't think he'd actually go for it, but then—**Manny leaped** off the balcony.

Not even joking. He just jumped.

Somehow, he landed on the **hood of the car**, doing a weird little **roll** as if he was **training for some action movie**.

There was a moment of **silence**, and then Manny held up my phone, all proud, like it was some kind of **prize**.

"**Got it!**" he shouted, grinning like he had just **saved the world**.

Honestly, I didn't know whether to laugh or start crying. I mean, sure, Manny had somehow **saved my phone**, but at what cost?

Mom is going to **lose it** when she finds out Manny just **jumped off the balcony** for no reason. And what if the phone was **damaged**? What if the **screen cracked**?

But hey, at least I have it back... for now.

Wednesday Afternoon

Okay, so I thought today would be a little less insane. I really did.

But after Manny pulled off his **crazy stunt**, I should have known better. The **real chaos** was just about to begin.

So, after the whole **balcony jump** and Manny handing me back my phone like it was some kind of **war medal**, I figured maybe I'd be in the clear for once. I was just glad to have my phone back, even if it looked like it had been through a **mini action movie**.

Then, Mom came into the room.

I could see the **look in her eyes**, and immediately, I knew something was off. She looked at the phone, gave it a quick **glare**, and then turned back to me with a **frown**.

“**What did I tell you about being careful with your things?**” she asked, her voice low and serious.

I was about to say something, like maybe trying to explain how **Manny** jumped off the balcony to get it for me, but before I could, Mom grabbed the phone.

And without another word, she **slammed it onto the ground**.

SMASH.

I stood there in complete shock, staring at the pieces of my phone scattered across the floor like it was some **horrible accident**.

“**What did you think was going to happen, Greg?**” Mom asked, shaking her head. “**I told you to be responsible. And now look at this.**”

I was standing there, trying to process the fact that my **phone was destroyed**—again. I could hardly even form a sentence. I mean, **why would she do that?**

“It’s not like it was your phone to begin with,” she muttered, almost to herself, and then she walked out of the room.

I was just left there, standing in the middle of the wreckage.

It felt like I was in some **nightmare** where everything was falling apart, and I was just trying to hold it all together.

I’m honestly **speechless** right now. Like, I get that she’s mad, but **smashing my phone**? Is that really the answer?

Thursday Morning

So, having a **secret sister** you didn’t know existed is already enough of a shock. But it turns out, **Ji-woo doesn’t speak a word of English**.

Okay, maybe like, *five words*. But none of them are helpful.

This morning, I walked into the hotel kitchen area to grab breakfast, and Ji-woo was already sitting at the table with a **tower of skincare bottles** spread out like it was some kind of **science lab**.

She looked up at me and said:

“오빠, 이 호텔은 완전 별로야.”

I just stared at her. I had **no idea** what that meant.

Then she said it again, only **louder**.

“오빠!! 이. 호. 텔. 별로야!”

I tried smiling and nodded like I understood.

“Uh... yeah. Totally. Hotel... not good?”

She rolled her eyes so hard I thought they were gonna get stuck. Then she said something super fast:

“너 진짜 이해 못하겠어? 핸드폰도 없고, 와이파이도 없고, 뭐 하는 거야?”

“Okay, okay, slow down,” I said, holding up my hands. “English? Maybe?”

She just blinked. Then sighed and started talking **even faster**.

I opened **Google Translate** on Mom’s tablet—since, you know, **my phone is dust** now—and tried typing in what I could remember. The result came out something like:

“You don’t understand anything? No phone, no Wi-Fi, what even is this trip?”

That sounded about right.

I tried replying with: “Sorry, I don’t speak Korean. Do you speak English?”

When I showed her the screen, she gave me a **look**, then muttered,

“아, 진짜 답답해.”

(Which Google Translate said means “Ugh, you’re so frustrating.”)

So yeah. Having a sister who only speaks Korean when you speak **zero Korean** is basically like having a roommate who keeps **insulting you, but you don’t even know it’s happening**.

At one point, she just handed me a sticky note that said:

“한글 배우세요. 지금.”

Which apparently means:

“Learn Korean. Now.”

So I guess this trip has officially turned into a **crash course in foreign language survival...** with subtitles only I can barely understand.

Awesome.

Thursday Afternoon

After a full morning of **awkward silence**, hand gestures, and Google Translate fails, I was just about ready to give up trying to communicate with Ji-woo.

That's when **Dad**—yes, **Frank Heffley himself**—suddenly decided to become a **language teacher**.

Now, I didn't even know Dad had any interest in **languages**, unless you count yelling "Turn that racket down!" in six different tones. But apparently, Dad took "**one semester of Korean in college**" and thinks he's fluent now.

So he sat Ji-woo down at the hotel desk like it was a classroom and said, "Okay, Ji-woo. Repeat after me: '**The weather is nice today.**'"

Ji-woo blinked. Then said:

“웨더... 이즈... 나이스?”

Dad clapped like she'd just passed the SATs.

“Exactly! You're a natural!”

I was watching from the couch, trying not to laugh. Ji-woo looked **so unimpressed**, like she'd rather be **watching K-dramas on 3% battery** than learn English from my dad, who still calls text messages “electronic notes.”

Then he pulled out some **old flashcards** he must've printed in 2008. Each one had a grainy photo and a word underneath, like:

APPLE

CAR

BOY

He pointed at the boy card and said, “That's **Greg**. Boy.”

Ji-woo narrowed her eyes at me, then back at the card.

“Boy,” she repeated. Then I smiled a little.

Dad handed her the next card. “This is **Toilet**.”

She nodded. “Toi...렛.”

“That's close enough,” Dad said proudly.

Honestly, I didn't know if this was working or if Ji-woo was just **pretending** so he'd leave her alone. But then—somehow—it started working.

By the end of the hour, Ji-woo could say stuff like:

- “**My name Ji-woo.**”
- “**Greg is... boy.**”
- “**This hotel smell weird.**” (Thanks, Manny.)

It was kind of amazing. And for the first time since she got here, she smiled.

So maybe, just maybe, this trip isn't *totally* doomed.

But let's be real—**we're still Heffley's**, and things are bound to go wrong again any second now.

Thursday Night

So after Ji-woo's surprise **English crash course** with Dad, things were actually starting to feel... kinda normal. Well, **Heffley normal**, which still means *slightly cursed*, but manageable.

That night, while everyone was out getting ice cream, I decided to dig through my suitcase one last time—and guess what I found buried under my emergency socks and extra deodorant?

My VR headset.

I couldn't believe it. I thought I left it at home, but nope—it was right there, like a gift from the **gaming gods**.

I plugged it in, made sure no one was around, and slid it over my face.

BOOM.

Instantly, I was in another world.

No crying babies, no Manny, no surprise sisters, just me, a lightsaber, and a bunch of virtual robots that needed slicing.

It was beautiful.

I was mid-battle, doing a perfect spin move, when I felt a **cold breeze** and heard a voice behind me.

“GREGORY HEFFLEY.”

I yanked off the headset and saw **Mom**, standing there with the kind of expression you see **right before a natural disaster** hits.

“Is that a **VIDEO GAME?**” she asked, slowly walking forward like I was holding a **wild raccoon**.

“Uh... no? It’s... educational,” I tried. “Like virtual PE. I’m exercising?”

She didn’t even respond. She just walked over, yanked the headset out of my hands, marched to the balcony, and—
THREW IT.

Right over the railing.

I ran to the edge and watched it **plummet fifty feet** into the Ecuadorian night, landing somewhere with a faint *crunch* that didn’t sound like a safe landing.

I just stood there, stunned.
“WHY?!” I shouted.

Mom crossed her arms. “You’ve already had **one phone smashed** and nearly **died of distraction**. I’m not letting you fry your brain with whatever that thing is.”

I was about to say something back, but she gave me **The Look**, and I knew there was no winning this round.

So now, in just a few days, I’ve lost:

- My phone
- My dignity
- My VR headset
- And probably half my sanity

At this point, I wouldn’t be surprised if Mom **catapulted my laptop into a volcano** next.

Friday Morning

Okay, I don’t know what’s going on anymore. I seriously feel like I’m trapped in some **weird dream** where everything is random and dangerous and **nobody cares about safety regulations**.

Because I just woke up...
ON TOP OF A MOVING CAR.

With a **parachute strapped to my back**.

I have absolutely **no memory** of how this happened. One second I was in the hotel bed, dreaming about rescuing my VR headset from a volcano, and the next, I’m opening my eyes and **the ground is MOVING** under me.

And not just a little. I mean, this car was going at least **40 miles per hour** down a bumpy Ecuadorian road.

I looked around, totally panicking, thinking maybe this was some **crazy prank show**, but no cameras, no sound guy, just me, a parachute, and a rusty roof.

I tried yelling, but my mouth was full of wind. Then I saw the **windshield below me**, and guess who was driving?

MANNY.

Yup.

Little Mr. Chaos himself was in the driver's seat, wearing sunglasses like he was in a spy movie, honking at random birds.

I started banging on the roof like:
"MANNY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"

He looked up and smiled like I was just a **bonus feature** in his joyride.
Then he shouted,
"Hold on! I'm gonna do a ramp!!"

A RAMP.

I didn't even get the chance to scream before he swerved off the road and launched the car off this **tiny hill** like he was in a stunt show.

I actually **flew** for half a second. I thought I was gonna die.

That's when the parachute kicked in.

And next thing I knew, I was **drifting through the air**, slowly floating down into somebody's backyard like an oversized delivery.

Some lady screamed and dropped her laundry basket.

I landed in a pile of bananas.

So yeah. Now I'm sitting under a banana tree, trying to figure out:

1. How I ended up here.
2. Why my brother is legally allowed to exist.
3. If I've actually gone insane.

And the day's just getting started.

Still Friday Morning

Okay, so remember how I thought **Manny** was the one driving the car I woke up on?

Yeah... turns out I was wrong.

Very wrong.

After floating down like a sad little action figure and landing in someone's banana patch, I got up, dusted myself off, and limped back toward the road. I was hoping to **wave down the car** and yell at Manny for almost **killing me with physics**.

But when the car drove past again, I got a good look inside.

It wasn't Manny.

It was some **random guy** with a **mustache**, sunglasses, and **one arm out the window** like he owned the road. And in the passenger seat, there was a **kid I've never seen in my life**, eating a lollipop and **watching cartoons** on a phone.

I froze.

"WHAT. THE. HECK."

I had just been **asleep on top of a stranger's car**, like some kind of rogue rooftop hitchhiker.

AND I HAVE NO IDEA HOW I GOT THERE.

There's only one logical explanation:

Somebody strapped a parachute on me, dropped me onto a car in my sleep, and sent me off like an Amazon package.

I tried checking my pockets for clues, but all I found was:

- A crushed granola bar
- One sock (mine? I'm not even sure anymore)
- And a hotel pen with the name "**Vista del Sol**" on it

Then I pulled out the hotel's emergency tablet and opened up Google Maps.

And guess what?

I was **20 kilometers away** from our apartment.

Twenty.

As in, **TWO. ZERO.**

As in, "You're basically in a whole other town and your mom's gonna scream."

And the worst part? The little blue dot on the map was **still moving farther away**.

I guess I wasn't just far from home—I was **actively drifting farther** by the minute.

So now I'm stuck in **some random Ecuadorian neighborhood**, surrounded by banana trees and barking dogs, with **no phone**, no money, and a tablet that's running at **4% battery**.

This might be it for me. This might be how I go out. Lost, confused, and smelling like bananas.

Friday, Probably Afternoon?

Okay, this is bad. Like, **end-of-the-world bad**.

Remember how I said I was 20 kilometers away from our apartment?

Well, now I'm **60 kilometers away**.

SIXTY.

That's basically a **whole country** when you're wearing flip-flops and carrying nothing but a dead hotel pen and a **tablet with 0% battery**.

Yup—**the tablet's dead**.

The screen went black right after I tried searching “how to teleport without money.”

So now I've got no map, no phone, and no clue where I am.

All I know is that I've walked through:

- One goat farm
- Two tiny villages
- And a forest that smelled like wet socks and burnt toast

At one point, I saw a chicken riding on the back of a **motorcycle** and honestly I wasn't even surprised anymore.

I tried asking people for directions using the **five Spanish words I remember from school**, but all I could say was:

“Hola. Greg. Perdido. Casa. Baño?”

(That last one might've been wishful thinking.)

A group of old ladies gave me a papaya and pointed west. I don't even know if they understood me or just thought I looked hungry. (Spoiler: I **was**.)

At this point, I've accepted that I may never make it back. This could be the end. I might just become a weird **Ecuadorian legend**.

“*El Chico de la Azotea*”—*The Rooftop Boy*.

Someone will write a folk song about me and nobody will believe I ever existed.

All because I decided to wear a **parachute to bed**.

Thanks a lot, vacation.

Saturday...? Morning...?

Okay, I don't even know how to write this anymore because **I don't even know what's real**.

Last night, I found a shady little patch of grass behind a bus station, curled up using my flip-flops as a pillow, and **passed out cold**. I figured I'd sleep for a few hours, wake up, and keep trying to get back to the apartment one slow kilometer at a time.

But when I woke up this morning...

Something was very wrong.

First of all, there were **no banana trees** anymore.

No jungle.

No chickens.

No yelling people on motorcycles.

Instead, I was in the middle of a **vast desert**.

Sand. Rocks. Mountains in the distance.

And the only other living thing around me was a **llama chewing on a Doritos bag**.

So I checked a road sign that looked like it had been there since **prehistoric times**.

And then I saw it:

Welcome to Chile

(Bienvenidos a Chile)

CHILE.

I almost fainted.

I somehow went from being **60 kilometers** from my apartment to waking up **2,000 kilometers away in a whole other country**.

HOW?!

Did someone put me on a **cargo truck** while I was sleeping?

Did I get mailed as a package again??

Is this just what happens when you give up and sleep behind a bus station??

I checked my pockets for clues, and this time I had:

- A half-eaten empanada (no idea where it came from)
- A Chilean bus ticket stamped “4:15 A.M.”
- A sticker on my shirt that said “**Soy Dormido**” (I think that means “I’m asleep”??)

So yeah. Either I sleepwalked into a **transcontinental nightmare**, or somebody out there is using me for a bizarre travel experiment.

And now I'm stranded in a new country, with no idea how to get back, no working devices, and no idea if **my family even knows I'm gone**.

If I ever get back from this, I'm never leaving the couch again.

??? Morning?? (I Give Up Keeping Track)

Okay. I don't know if this is **some kind of twisted prank show**, or if I'm stuck in a video game with **no save points**, but I have officially lost all grip on **reality**.

Because after waking up in CHILE of all places yesterday, I decided I'd just find a shady spot, rest for a bit, and maybe—**just maybe**—I'd stop waking up in random places.

Spoiler:

That didn't happen.

I fell asleep under a palm tree behind a surf shack.

And when I opened my eyes again, I wasn't in Chile anymore.

Nope.

I was on a **beach**.

But not just any beach.

This one had **penguins**.

PENGUINS.

And freezing wind.

And seagulls that scream like they're in emotional distress.

I looked around, dazed and shivering, and saw a **weathered old smartphone** half-buried in the sand.

I picked it up, and somehow—it actually **turned on**.

1% battery.

The screen flickered and opened to Google Maps.

And there it was.

The blue dot.

Greg Heffley.

Located at the bottom of South America.

**Tierra del Fuego.
ARGENTINA.**

I literally stared at the screen and whispered,
“How...?”

HOW did I get from Ecuador to Chile to **the absolute southern tip of the continent** in like...
two naps?!

That's not sleep. That's **time travel**.
At this rate, I'm gonna wake up next on a satellite.

The phone died in my hand before I could do anything.
No signal, no charger, no nothing.

So now I'm standing barefoot on a **wind-blasted beach in Argentina**, surrounded by penguins
and fish bones, and I'm probably on a **list of missing persons** in five countries.

And the scariest part?

This STILL isn't the worst vacation I've had.

Sunday(?) — End of the World

So there I was—cold, alone, and completely out of ideas—standing on the bottom tip of
Argentina wondering how my life spiraled this far.

I mean, it started with a broken Xbox.
Now I'm basically in **the land of penguins and regret**.

But just when I thought things couldn't get any weirder...

I saw a guy.
With a boat.
Wearing ski goggles and sipping mate tea like he was **totally normal**.

I figured I had nothing to lose, so I ran up to him and said,
“Hola. Greg. Lost. Help. Boat?”

The guy looked at me, nodded slowly, and said:
“Vas a la Antártida?”
Which, thanks to my barely-functioning brain, I understood as:
“You going to Antarctica?”

And for some reason I said:
“...Sí.”

So yeah.

That's how I ended up in a **small supply boat**, wrapped in a tarp, eating crackers with **a guy named Diego and his dog, Pablo**, sailing through the **freaking Drake Passage**.

Let me tell you something:

The ocean is scary.

Waves the size of buildings.

Icebergs everywhere.

Pablo kept barking at seals.

But eventually, after what felt like a million hours of **cold and seasickness**, we saw it:

Ice.

Snow.

A million birds that looked like they wanted to fight me.

Welcome to Antarctica.

Tuesday Morning (For Real This Time)

Okay, I don't know if **this** is a dream, or if everything that happened **before** was the dream.

But here's the deal:

I woke up, and I was in **Ecuador** again.

Not in Antarctica.

Not in Argentina.

Not 60 kilometers away from home.

Not even on a random beach with penguins.

Just... back in **Ecuador**, at **Mom's cousin Yara's apartment**.

The first thing I did was check the date on my phone.

It was **Tuesday**—the same day I thought I'd been stranded in the wildest, most random journey of my life.

Everything felt exactly the same as it had when I first arrived here—except, maybe, I was starting to feel like I **actually knew what day it was**.

I looked at the clock.

It was only **9:00 a.m.**

I could hear Yara making breakfast in the kitchen and the sound of **Manny** complaining about the cereal.

Was I still in that weird dream? Was it all just some crazy illusion?
Did I somehow go to **the bottom of South America** and end up in Antarctica... but also still be in **Ecuador** at the same time?

For the first time, I realized—I could **remember** everything clearly now.
I knew what had happened. I knew what was real.

But the most confusing part?

I KNEW IT WAS TUESDAY.

Which means I must've woken up at the right time, from whatever long **dream** I was having. A dream where penguins, random car rides, and flying VR headsets were real.

I couldn't explain it.

But one thing was for sure:

I'm staying **in this bed** as long as possible. I'm not leaving until I figure out if I've somehow **broken time** or just had the longest nap ever.

Tuesday Afternoon (Just When I Thought I Was Safe)

So I had just convinced myself that I was back to **normal life**—that maybe I could relax, enjoy some quiet time, and **not** end up in random countries.

But then **Mom** came in.

And do you know what she said?

“Pack your bags, Greg! We’re going skydiving!”

Skydiving.

I blinked. I stared at her like she had just suggested we were going to **ride a live volcano**.

“WHAT?!?” I asked.

“Why?!?”

She just looked at me, completely casual, like it was the most normal thing in the world.
“You need a little adventure, Greg. You’ve been moping around here for days! It’s time to face your fears!”

My stomach dropped.

I was **not** ready for this.

What about the **crazy dream** I just had? What about the **bananas, the penguins, the flying VR?** How could I be expected to jump out of a plane when I was still trying to recover from nearly being a permanent resident of Antarctica?

I felt my body start to **shut down** just thinking about it.
I thought about how I was **NOT ready** for high altitudes.
I thought about how **Mom was insane** for even suggesting it.

"No way," I said, backing away from her, my eyes wide.
"I'm still recovering from a little... trip."

But Mom wasn't having it.
She smiled and grabbed my hand like I was her new best friend.
"It's going to be amazing, Greg! You'll see."

I barely had time to protest before she grabbed my backpack and started throwing in **clothes, snacks, and goggles** like it was a normal Wednesday morning.

I can't believe this.
I just had a dream where I went to Antarctica and now **I'm being forced to jump out of an airplane.**

I guess my new life lesson is:
Never relax. You're probably getting pushed out of a plane next.

Tuesday, Evening (The World Is Weird)
So... this happened.

Skydiving.
I jumped out of an airplane.

And you know what? I survived. I actually **landed** safely. But not just anywhere—nope, I somehow **landed right on top of a hatch in our apartment.**

Yeah.

You heard that right.

After the freefall, the rush, and the "**OH MY GOSH I'M GOING TO DIE**" thoughts, I expected to land in some open field or on a soft patch of grass.

But instead?

I fell straight through the **air**, somehow hit the roof of our building, and ended up with **my feet planted perfectly on the hatch to the storage room** in our apartment building.

I barely had time to process what had happened when Mom's voice came from the ground below, cheering:
"Good job, Greg!"

I'm standing there, trying not to lose my mind, and she's acting like this is just another **Wednesday**.

"See? I told you skydiving would be fun!"

I stared down at her, blinking in disbelief.

"I landed on the roof," I muttered.
"Mom, I don't think this is normal."

But she was already packing up the gear like she was already thinking of our next **adventure**.

"You did great!" she said.
"You're a natural!"

I can't believe it. I don't know if I'm supposed to be **proud** or just **confused**.

How did I go from **freaking Antarctica** to landing on a roof hatch in **our apartment**?

I don't know, but I'm starting to suspect that **my life might be some kind of weird rollercoaster** I didn't sign up for.

But for now, I'm just happy I'm still **alive** and that my **feet didn't get stuck in the hatch**.

I'm going to need some time to process all of this.

Wednesday Afternoon – Fregley, Really?

So just when I thought things were starting to calm down and I could process everything that's happened in the last few days, guess who shows up?

Holly Hills.

And guess what she calls me?

"Fregley."

I mean, of all the names to call me, she picks the one from that nightmare of a day at **Roll-A-Round** a few years ago. You know the one—where I tried to be **cool**, made a fool of myself in front of her, and ended up getting nicknamed "Fregley" by her and her friends.

It all started at that church event. Mom made us sit a few rows ahead of the Hills family, and when we were shaking hands, I managed to get a handshake with **Holly**. Pretty basic stuff, right? But **Rodrick**, being the genius he is, decided to take all the handsets so I couldn't call her after. The only phone left was a **speaker phone**.

I tried calling Holly, but when I got to Mom's room to dial, **Dad** caught me and started reading a book. Of course, I had to hide under a duvet, trying to make sure he didn't catch me. And just when I was about to sneak out, the **phone rang** and scared the life out of Dad. He threw me out of his room, so I couldn't call her again.

When I finally got another chance, I called her and—surprise, surprise—**Mrs. Hills** answered. Then, of course, **Mom** got involved. They talked, and then Holly ended up going to **Roll-A-Round**. I had to go, too, but I didn't have a ride, so **Rowley** showed up dressed as his favorite singer, **Joshie**.

Once I got to the rink, everything went downhill. I lost a contact lens, so I had to wear my **backup glasses**. I couldn't skate to save my life. And when they announced **Couple Skates**, I figured I could finally ask Holly to skate with me. But before I could even open my mouth, she asked,

"Isn't your name Fregley?"

I couldn't believe it. All the embarrassment, all the buildup—and she still remembered me as that awkward **"Fregley."**

So yeah, I got mad, told her I was **Greg Heffley**, but by the time her friends showed up and took her away, I was already over it. I went straight to the **arcade** and didn't move from there.

And now, **Holly** shows up in my living room, all casual, calling me "Fregley" like it's a joke. She probably thinks it's funny.

I'll admit, a part of me wants to **call her out**, but I'm **way past caring** about impressing her now.

But seriously, **who does that?!**

Wednesday Afternoon – Sandwich Therapy

Okay, after **Holly** showed up and called me "Fregley" like it was no big deal, I decided to **take a breather**. I mean, what's the point of trying to figure out life when everyone around you is either embarrassing you or making it impossible to be taken seriously?

So I walked to the kitchen.

I wasn't thinking about anything big—just wanted a little **peace** in the form of a sandwich.

First things first: I got the bread.

Not the fancy stuff. Just **plain old white bread**.

Then, I grabbed the **peanut butter** and spread it as thick as possible. None of that skimpy “healthy” stuff. This was **Greg Heffley sandwich-making**—I needed **substance**.

But then I had a thought.
Maybe I should be a little adventurous today.
So I grabbed the **jelly**. Not grape, though. I was feeling **bold**. I went with strawberry.

There. Perfect sandwich.

Now, if you’re wondering why I’m telling you about my sandwich, it’s because, for a moment, it felt like the one thing I could control. I didn’t have to worry about **Holly**, or **Manny’s chaos**, or my **messed-up life**. It was just me, a sandwich, and the sweet taste of **temporary freedom**.

I sat down at the kitchen table, took a bite, and tried to **block everything out**. It was surprisingly good. Maybe it was the fact that it wasn’t **chaotic**, or maybe it was the peanut butter-to-jelly ratio. Whatever it was, for once, I didn’t care about anything else.

Thursday Morning – A New Day, Same Old Chaos

I woke up, still feeling kind of strange about the whole **sandwich situation**. You’d think I’d be used to weird things happening by now, but nope, life just keeps throwing curveballs.

Anyway, I got up, got dressed, and decided I wasn’t going to let **Holly** stealing my sandwich be the highlight of my day.

But, of course, **Manny** had other plans.

I walked into the kitchen, expecting a nice quiet breakfast, when I found Manny with his **“Joshie” doll** on the table. It was 7:30 a.m., and he was already having a full-on conversation with it.

“Don’t worry, Joshie. I’ll take care of you. We can even share my cereal,” Manny said, looking at the doll like it was his **best friend**.

I could only **roll my eyes**. Manny’s never been a normal kid, and it’s clear he’s getting more bizarre by the day.

I poured some cereal, but I couldn’t help but overhear Manny’s conversation with his doll.

“Joshie, we need to talk about Greg. He didn’t even offer me any of his sandwich yesterday. He’s kind of selfish, don’t you think?”

I almost choked on my cereal.
“What?!”

So now Manny's upset because **I didn't share my sandwich?** Seriously?

I just let it go and took a deep breath. At this point, I realized **nothing** was ever going to be normal in this house.

Thursday Afternoon – A Close Call at the Pool

So, I agreed to race Rowley on his giant inflatable dolphin. Big mistake.

I thought it would be harmless—a simple, goofy race to the deep end. **No big deal**, right?

Well, I was wrong.

Rowley and I started at the shallow end, and I swear, I was **doing fine** at first. The dolphin was way too big for me to control, but I was making it work—sort of. Rowley, on the other hand, was **gliding effortlessly** on his ridiculous, oversized inflatable.

I started getting competitive.

“I’m gonna beat you!” I yelled, paddling as fast as I could.

But of course, **Manny** decided to make it more interesting. He was **splashing water** around, yelling something about how I was going to “drown like a fish.”

And that’s when it happened.

I was so focused on winning that I didn’t notice my **dolphin getting stuck in the deep end**. Before I could even realize what was going on, I was **flipping off the side**, and next thing I knew, I was **underwater**.

My legs tangled in the inflatable, and for a second, I couldn’t breathe. I kicked around, trying to get free, but the **dolphin** was wrapped around my legs like some kind of **water trap**.

I started panicking. I couldn’t see anything, couldn’t get my footing.

This is how it ends, huh? I thought.

Then, out of nowhere, **Rowley** reached down, grabbing my arm, pulling me up just in time for me to gasp in the air.

I was coughing, sputtering, and feeling like my life had flashed before my eyes.

“You okay, Greg?” Rowley asked, looking way more concerned than he probably should’ve been.

I couldn’t answer at first. I was too busy trying to recover from almost **drowning**.

“I—I almost died,” I finally said, still struggling to breathe.

Rowley looked at me like I was crazy, but I couldn’t help it.

This was **not** the peaceful day I had in mind.

And to make things worse, **Manny** was laughing from the side of the pool.

“Haha, Greg! I told you you’d drown like a fish!”

I glared at him, still catching my breath.

Maybe **next time**, I’ll just stay away from anything inflatable, and maybe even the pool itself.

First Day of 9th Grade – A New Chapter

Okay, so here we are—**the first day of 9th grade**. I can’t believe it’s finally here. Somehow, it feels like the start of something **big**, even though nothing about my life ever really goes as planned.

I woke up this morning, feeling the weight of a **fresh start**. I mean, sure, **Manny** is still being a pain, and **Mom’s still weirdly obsessed with signing us up for random classes**, but this is high school. This is **different**.

I got dressed in my new clothes (which **Mom** insisted on picking out don’t ask) and grabbed my backpack. On the way to school, **Rowley** was bouncing around like it was the best day ever.

“This is going to be awesome!” Rowley said, practically skipping next to me.

I couldn’t help but **groan**. Rowley’s always excited about the **smallest things**, and while I admire his enthusiasm, I wasn’t feeling the same way. I mean, it’s high school. **The stakes are higher**, and **everything** feels more serious.

I walked through the school gates, and it hit me—**this was it**. 9th grade. The start of something that was either going to be amazing or a total disaster.

I couldn’t even think straight because of everything that happened this summer. Between **the sandwich fiasco**, **Manny’s high-diving stunts**, and **almost drowning** in the pool, I’m just trying to make it through the day without something else going totally wrong.

As we entered the school, I saw some familiar faces—**Holly Hills**, of course, looking like she was already way ahead of everyone else, and **Chester Heffley** (yes, I’m still not used to that) walking with a smirk on his face, probably planning some new prank for me.

The bell rang, and I couldn’t help but feel that **nervous excitement** bubbling up.

I guess this is the part where I figure out if I'm going to survive high school or if I'm going to be **swallowed whole** by all the chaos. Either way, I'm **Greg Heffley**. And no matter how crazy things get, I'm still here.

So here goes nothing—**9th grade**. Bring it on.

